

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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## MR. CANNING AT SCHOOL.

### LETTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION.

*Salisbury, 22 Oct. 1822.*

SIR,

As long as you were rambling about, in Lancashire, or elsewhere, without *power*, your opinions and wishes were of comparatively little consequence to the country. Kept under by him who has, happily delivered us of himself, your views of public matters were of little importance to us. *Now*, however, the case is very different. A thought coming into your mind, and created, perhaps, by an extra glass of champagne or by an extra half dozen ounces of turtle, may lead to words, those words to acts, and those acts by *possibility*, to the happiness, or the misery, of millions. What, then, must have been the state, what the dangers, of this country, when he whom you have succeed-

ed, and who had even greater power than you have, was *insane*? And when, if we were to believe the positive assertions of the *Courier* newspaper, he was left in the full swing of power, after the rest of the Ministers, and even the King himself, had declared him to be *mad*?

Leaving this, however, as a fact to illustrate the nature of that precious thing which is the "envy of surrounding nations and the admiration of the world," let me proceed to observe, that it is *now* of great importance that you *think rightly* with regard to public matters; for, though you are called the Minister for *Foreign Affairs*, it is plain enough, that you must be the chief Minister for *all* the affairs; or, that you must be placed in a state of deep degradation. This, I take it you will not submit to. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance, that you be *well-informed* as to the nation's affairs; and, as I am convinced, that you are not, with regard to those affairs, well-

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informed, as yet, I am now about to take you *regularly to school*.

In that inexhaustible fund of matter for commentary, your last speech at Liverpool, you told the eager tax-hunters, that the *press*, the *public press*, was more than sufficient to balance against all the *increase of power* that the *Ministers* had received. Their increase of power, since Pitt became Minister has been as 64 is to about 13. For, that is the difference between the *peace-taxes* of 1786, and the *peace-taxes* of 1821. So that their power is *five times* as great as it was; and, it is curious enough, that you should set against this power, the power of that press, which has been *enslaved*, and, of course, *enfeebled*, in exactly the same proportion, that the taxes have been increased. While the *peace-taxes* have been growing up from 13 to 64 millions, there have been passed *forty-seven laws* to make the *press* less free than it was; and, at last, having approached step by step, *Sidmouth's Circular* and *Six-Acts* put an end, in effect, to *all freedom*, as far as the press is concerned.

However, *you*, at any rate, who thus extolled the rights and privileges and powers of the public press, cannot very well complain,

if it employ a small portion of its remaining powers upon you; and especially in the way that those powers are going to be employed here; namely, in teaching *you* that which you manifestly do not know, and yet, which, by all means you ought well to understand. You were, they say, *Captain of Eton School*; that is to say, the forwardest of all the boys in that great seminary for tax-eaters. But, you are not the *Captain* in the School of Political Knowledge. Nay, I think your captainship at Eton an injury to you, and a presumption against you as a Minister. When the mind has begun its career by deeming the despicable nonsense of the colleges a matter of *importance*, it is not easily brought into the paths of useful knowledge. When a lad has been admired and praised, and that too, by grave Doctors of Divinity, for acquirements that never can be of any real use to his country, it is, when he becomes a man, very difficult to make him think little of those acquirements, and to set seriously about the getting of others in their stead. *Every* regularly bred school and college man is, more or less, a school-boy in mind to the end of his days; and, in proportion to his eclat as a school and



college man is frequently, and most frequently, his unfitness for any station of real importance. What a misfortune it was to have been *Captain of Eton* became evident enough when you *turned your pen to politics*. Let any one *now* read the Anti-Jacobin newspaper, of which you were the *director* and in which you were the *principal writer*. I say nothing about the *politics* of a publication, which had falsehood in view as its principal object; but, let any one *now* read that paper in order to judge of *the state* and *size* of the mind of a Captain of Eton. I do not allude to the *illiberality* and the *meanness*; but to the *puerilities* of it; to its real *childishness*. Let any one look at the miserable plagiarism committed on the authors of the *Dunciad*. Let him look at the school-boy trash about *iambics*. Let him look at the silly stuff about *Mr. Higgins of St. Mary Axe*. Why, Sir, this was all very well as coming from a school-boy or from a hack - writer; but, as coming from a *Privy Counsellor*, as you then were, it was not very well; as coming from one of that body, which the law calls, "an *honourable, noble, and reverend assembly*," the poor thread-bare jests about *Mr. Higgins of St. Mary Axe*, used, too, for very

foul political purposes, were not very well. You were *younger* than you are now, to be sure; but, you were *old enough* to have been, at that time, nearly *ten years* a *Member of Parliament*; and you were old enough to be a *Privy Counsellor*; though you were not old enough to be in mind, any thing more than a *Captain of Eton*.

The school-boy character seems to have clung to your mind all the way through. Your public papers during the dispute with America, the only really important discussion in which you ever took a part, were so remarkable for nothing as for *school-boy wit*. There was, in them all, a total absence of that *earnestness*, which, in such cases, is an indispensable requisite. The reasoning was always too *sophistical* to convince, and the manner was such as could hardly fail to offend. Yours were the first state papers into which, as far as I had seen or heard, *irony* was ever introduced; and it is, perhaps, not going much too far to say, that we owe about *seventy millions* of our present debt to the *sarcasms* which the Captain of Eton could not prevail upon himself to suppress. These sarcasms enabled our partizans in America

to laugh at the President and the Congress; but the sarcasms were finally answered from the *cannon's mouth*, and in the defeat and capture of ship after ship and fleet after fleet by that force, which you, in your place in Parliament, had described as "half a dozen *fir-frigates* with *bits of striped bunting* flying at their mast-heads." The *f's* and the *b's*; the *fir-frigates* and *bits of bunting*, were pretty enough in themselves; and they were well enough suited to the character of a *Captain of Eton*; but, wholly unworthy of a *Minister of State*.

We shall, doubtless, not now have to witness any of these school-boy freaks. But, I am satisfied, that you are deficient in that kind of knowledge, which is necessary, at this time, in one who is to be the *Minister* in the House of Commons; and this you must now be, or, as I have before observed, your degradation will be great indeed. The office must be filled by *you* or by Mr. *Peel*. He, though so much younger, is by far the fitter man of the two; because, in the first place, he is almost a *new man*. He is, in a great measure, free from the sins of the Pitt-faction. He has never laughed and scoffed at those who now have it in their power to

retaliate, and who, having the power, will by no means want the inclination. He is as able as you at making mere *statements*. He is clear and concise; and, which, in circumstances like the present, is the greatest recommendation of all, there is a fairness in his reasoning and a frankness and earnestness in his language and manner, which bespeak *sincerity*.

Nevertheless *you* must be the *Minister*, or your elevation is your fall. To communicate to you, therefore, a part of that knowledge, which is necessary to your duly discharging of this office, is the object of the Letters of which this is the first, and which will be SIX in number, corresponding, in that respect, with those ACTS, which were passed in 1819, in order, as you expressed it, to "*extinguish for ever the accursed torch of discord*."

Nor is it, Sir, presumptuous in me to take you to school. Your time, for the last 28 or 30 years, has been spent in "*getting on*," as it is properly enough called; and I have been at school all this while. *Experience*, or *adversity*, is usually looked upon as a sufficient teacher; but, I have had the aid of *both of them*. The former, at any rate, has been my



constant attendant, at home and abroad, by land by sea, in town and in country, in prison and at large; and I have been always sober, and always up with the sun, to receive her instructions. You have got high rank and great riches and power. I have gained the *knowledge*; and I beg you to be assured, that I would not change with you, if you had forty times the riches and power that you have. A *nod* with a "*your health, Mr. Cobbett,*" from men that would, a few years ago, have gladly seen me hanged up like a dog, are infinitely more valuable than the *nine times nine cheers* that you received from the mean, mercenary, tax-hunting crew at Liverpool; and the pleasure of having the contrast to draw is worth more than all the wealth you could have accumulated, even if you really had *submitted*, at last, to be Governor General of India. This is what I never can mention unaccompanied with expressions of surprise. From the very first rumour of your being intended for Governor General, until you made the *confession* at Liverpool, I always said, in print as well as out, that I could not believe you capable of such submission. I do not pretend to disregard riches more than other

men. I should like to be rich myself and to see all my family rich; but, never, I most solemnly declare; never, for the last twenty years, would I have accepted of that post: no, not the very next day after they had sentenced me to pass two years in a felon's gaol, would I have accepted of the post of Governor General of India. For the honour of talent, I hope that it will yet be made appear that there was, to your acceptance of this post, some motive other than that to which it has naturally been ascribed.

I found my pretensions to be your teacher upon the best of all possible grounds; namely, that, as to all the chief matters appertaining to your office, I have *greater ability* than you. I care not who calls this *vanity*: the questions with me, and, indeed, with all men of sense, are, whether it be *true*, and whether it be *useful to state it*. A great deal of what passes for "*modesty*" ought to pass for *cowardice*, or *servility*. For the oppression and the insults that a people has to endure from *wealth* and from what is called *birth*, they have to thank, principally, the cowardice and mercenariness of poor men of talent. This is one of the great sources of the miseries of mankind. The

talent that ought to be employed for the *public good* is employed in *upholding* the *ignorance* which possesses power to enable the man of talent to live at his *ease*. The love of ease induces him to be the underling, and even the eulogist, of those whom he despises. How many pamphlets, how many thousands of paragraphs, have been written to extol the talents and wisdom of the poor, dunderheaded, bothering, crazy thing that you have succeeded! You remember the time when he *shot you*, and you, doubtless remember, that, at that time, a man wrote a pamphlet to show how much *more fit than you that thing was to be a Secretary of State!* The pamphleteer got a *place* for his pamphlet; he has since been a *defaulter* to a great amount; but, he is at large, and lives at his *ease!* GOLDSMITH accuses POPE, and justly, "of a base abandonment of his own superiority," in calling "an *honest* man the *noblest work of God.*" But, if this abandonment was base; if this exaggeration in praise of moral rectitude was a base abandonment of the rights of mental superiority, by what word, or by what combination of words, shall we describe the business of those men of talent, who, either by word

or inference, extol the wisdom and talent of such men as Castle-reagh and Sidmouth!

You, to be sure, are far indeed from being a man like these; but, still, I know that you are my inferior as to all the matters appertaining to your office; I know that you have less ability than I have with regard to those matters; and, this being the case, I have a right to take you to school if I choose to do it. The great matter of all now is, the devising and proposing of means to preserve the kingdom from a state of confusion. Can you, who never foresaw, who never got even a glimpse at the causes which tended to produce that confusion; can you, who thought, and who said, that *all the dangers were at an end* the moment an English soldier entered Paris; can you, who in 1816, promised us a speedy return of the sunshine of prosperity; can you, who voted and spoke for making the Bank pay in two years from 1811, though war should still be going on, and that, too, without any reducing of interest or rectifying of contracts; can you, who so vociferously called for an unanimous vote from the Collective Wisdom in favour of Peel's Bill, as the means of "setting the question *at rest for ever;*" can you,



who, with all the dreadful effects of the cash-measures before you, and with a cause steadily at work to make those effects still more and more dreadful, could only the other day, talk of the evil being *temporary*; can you, or can any one for you, pretend that you are not, in this respect, the *inferior* of him, who, many years ago, foresaw and foretold all that has now happened, who, at every stage, warned the country of what would come next; and who has shown that he understood the interests of every class of the community, and saw as clearly how each class would be affected by such or such measures or events, as if he had belonged to that particular class and had spent his whole life in thinking solely of its affairs?

I know, that, compared with this department of knowledge, every thing of a *literary* character sinks out of sight. Yet this is of some importance; and here, too, I am your *master*. I can state more clearly and reason more forcibly than you. Matters intricate in their nature I can simplify with more facility than you. I shall insert,\* at the end of this Letter (if I have room) a copy

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\* The insertion of the Petition here alluded to, is postponed, for want of room.

of my Petition to Parliament in 1820. I give it as a specimen of *perfect writing*. The matter of it is, at this moment, interesting beyond description. But I give it as a *piece of writing*; and I defy you to equal it. It was presented by LORD HOLLAND and Mr. COKE: no more attention was paid to it than if it had expressed the mewings of a cat. This was what I expected; but, there it is on the *journals*; and, let the state of the country *now* be the commentary on its statements. However, I give it here merely as a *piece of writing*; as such I throw it down in the way of challenge to you and to all the captains of all the schools and all the colleges. It prays the Parliament to interfere, in order to preserve to me *an estate*; but, though I should like the estate very well, I prefer the ownership of the petition to that of the estate.

Even in your own department of *Foreign Affairs* I am more skilled than you. In the first place, though I confess it is a trifle, I can write and speak the French language better than you can, and, perhaps better even than any of your interpreters. This is little, I allow; but, still it is *something*. The intrigues of courts I am ignorant of; but, any clumsy or

half-crazy devil can manage them, if he have money at command. The principles and practice of Public Law I know as well as you can know them. I do not say *better*, because you may have studied them with as much assiduity as I have, and because I do not question your capacity to comprehend and apply what you read. But, I know them as well as you, and can write upon any subject appertaining to them with more ability than you, because I can state and reason more clearly and more forcibly than you, because I can illustrate better, and because I can, without the smallest leaning towards levity, render subjects, naturally dry and wearisome, not repulsive to the mind. And, as to the *interests of the nation*, as these are dependant on its foreign concerns, I am convinced I understand them better than you. I will do you the justice to say, that I believe, that you have firmly fixed in your mind this great principle, that *every* thing ought to give way to the perpetuating of the greatness, and even the *predominance*, of England; and that you despise, as heartily as I do, all the *cant* about the "*mutual prosperity*" of nations, which has much about as much sense in it as the *mutual* success of two boxers

or two *lovers*. It is like the *public loans*, which always used to be *gaining* concerns for the public and for the loan-jobbers too. This *mutual* doctrine I believe you to despise; and I believe you would, if you could, secure to England, *no matter by what means*, a decided predominance amongst the nations of the world. This is my principle; but, I am satisfied, that your views, as to the *means*, are not correct. I will not suppose, that the miserable agents employed abroad by your crack-brained predecessor, will all be employed by you. But, generally speaking, *they must*; a circumstance which you will owe to those sweet sink-holes of *boroughs*, to which you are so much attached. Your notions as to the *interior* prove to me, that you have no idea of the *exertions* that it will be necessary for the nation to make to maintain even its *present station*. Your talk at Liverpool would warrant the belief, that you think we can remain at peace *for ever*; or, at least, for a *very long period*. You see the danger that would arise from our going to war; you see, in short, that we cannot go even without destroying *the system*; and, therefore, you think only of *peace*. This constitutes your unfitness for the times. There must be war



before many years go over our heads ; or, England is doomed to be a very little and contemptible nation. All the elements for producing her humiliation are collecting together ; and, if you cannot see this, I can ; but of this I shall have more to say hereafter.

Upon these grounds I claim the right of taking you to school and of giving you some good long lessons before the next meeting of Parliament. But, besides these grounds, there is, further, the *reputation* for knowledge and talent, in which I am far the superior of you all. I have set up my judgment against that of the Ministry and of the Parliament, taking in both sides of the House ; this has been done in the most direct and marked manner ; and time has decided, that *I was right*, and that *all you were wrong*. This decision has not been in a corner ; it has not been by silent vote. The whole nation has witnessed it. Every tongue talks of it. It is matter of deep interest with every man who is not actually a pauper or a beggar. The malice, the baseness, the cowardice, the cruelty of my powerful foes had made my *name* as well known as that of the air or the sun ; and now have come events to couple *knowledge* with that name. Two facts

are known to the whole nation : that I have, for years, been persecuted for *foretelling* that certain evils would come to pass ; and that those evils *have come to pass*. There needs nothing more. It would be against nature, if, under such circumstances, men did not, as to public matters, confide in my judgment more than in that of any other man. You, who have places and pensions and who are sent from the boroughs, may call yourselves, exclusively, *public men* ; but, who is really so much of a public man as I am ?

And do you gentlemen of Whitehall think that you, or your ambassadors, have as much weight with foreign governments as I have ? Talk of vanity ! It must be vanity indeed, that can make you suppose, that any of the pretty palavering things called *Notes* and *Despatches* can have as much effect with foreign governments as the *Register* has. It goes and tells the *whole story*. It enables all governments to see, not what you would do if you could, but what you *can* do and what you *cannot* do. It does not *assert* this or that : it carries the proof : it shows that the state of things *must be* thus, and thus : and the reputation of the writer has gone before it.

It is become quite a fashion to set up a cry about attempts to *pull down dignities*, to speak *irreverently of office and authority*. This may be called, by some, an attempt of that kind; but, it is not. I do not speak irreverently of any office: I only assert my own superiority over those who are in office; and this I do with a view of getting one of them to listen with attention to the lessons that I am about to give him. Yet, I will allow, that, under almost any circumstances but the present, it would not be right to talk in the manner that I have now talked. "In peace," says Shakespear, "there is nothing that so becomes a man as *mild behaviour* and *humility*; but, when the *blast of war* blows in our ears, then *defiance*," and so on. The blast of war has been blowing in my ears for a pretty long time, and every advantage, however foul, has been taken of me. I always said, I would take my revenge, and take it I will. Not, however, by base means resembling those that have been employed against me. To witness the confusion of my foes would be nothing, if I did not let the world see that I perceived and enjoyed it.

Were it not that I take the will for the deed, I should certainly

be very ungrateful; for, to the measures against me I owe a large part of what I possess of knowledge, of fame, of habits of industry, and, perhaps, of health and strength of body. I am sure that Sidmouth's Circular has prevented me from swallowing many a score pounds of beef and pudding. Before they sent me to prison I used to drink ale, and sometimes wine. I then took to small beer. And, when Sidmouth's Circular came out I took to milk, or water. I am now frequently restrained from *another slice* by the thought of the Doctor's speech in 1817. "A little piece more, Mr. Cobbett." I seem to hesitate; but Ellenborough or the old Doctor or the Stern-path man, or perhaps, *you*, came into my head; and I hold firm even against intreaties that it becomes almost rude to resist. Many and many a day do I sit and carve, and see others eat, all sorts of things that I like, while I grind a bit of dry bread; and all this on account of Sidmouth's Circular and the like. If it had not been for these things, I should, instead of being fit to take you to school, been as fat as a hog by this time, and almost as stupid. I should, perhaps, have been fit to make one of a *crew*, which, having *Six-Acts* in my eye,



I will not particularly describe. "Not so bad as that!" some one will say. Well, I hope not; but, at any rate, I should not have been *what I am*.

I might now give the thing up. I have *triumphed* completely. When Wellington got to Paris from Spain, you, in a speech made at Liverpool soon afterwards, said, "for *what is to follow* I do not *much care*. We have *triumphed*." With much more reason I might say the same now. Let what will come, I have triumphed; and I might remain here, in the country, and hunt hares and never see London again. I am, by fits, tempted to do it; or, at least, the thought comes into my head. But, then I think of the old Doctor's speech again and of Ellenborough's *scowl*, and of the speeches of Mackintosh and Scarlett. This braces me up, and makes me start afresh. So that I shall, I dare say, keep on till I see the **THING** fairly out to an end. And, besides, the *next Session* of Parliament holds forth such a temptation to face the smoke of the Wen! We shall have such famous work! The shooters and fox-hunters will be dull compared with us.

It is to prepare you, Sir, for this delightful session that I have un-

dertaken that task to which I beg you to be pleased to consider this Letter as an **INTRODUCTION**. It shall be my business to anticipate the difficulties that you will have to encounter, and then to instruct you how to overcome them. I do not expect you to acknowledge the obligation that you will be under to me: to be satisfied that you must *feel* will be quite enough for

Your most obedient  
And most humble Servant,  
WM. COBBETT.

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### DINNER AT SALISBURY.

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ON the 22d instant, being a Fair and Market-day at the city of Salisbury, I went from Up-husband in the morning, through Andover, and got to Salisbury at about half after ten o'clock, going to the Three Swans Inn, that being the place where the farmers usually assemble to dine in the greatest numbers. Half after one o'clock is the usual dinner-time, and then I went into the dining-room, and took a seat amongst the rest. The party at dinner consisted, in appearance, of some of the most opulent far-

mers, and as to numbers, amounted, perhaps, to about sixty or seventy. But, by the time that the cloth was removed, the farmers from other Inns arrived in great numbers; till, at last, the room, which is a very large one, was completely filled by gentlemen standing as well as sitting; and I was informed that not only the staircase was crowded but that great numbers were in the yard unable to get in. At this time, when there could not be much less than five hundred persons assembled, it is remarkable that I could not discover *a single face that I had ever seen before.*

—The King's health having been drunk as is usual upon such occasions, a Gentleman rose to propose my health; observing that he had never seen me that he knew of, but that, understanding that I was in the room, he should propose my health, thinking that it might be the means of drawing forth something that might be useful to the company. Upon this the Chairman rose, and without any thing in the way of introduction, gave my health, which was drunk individually, each person saying, as he took up his glass, "Mr. Cobbett's health." One Gentleman was proceeding with the usual signal for giving

*cheers*, but the company did not seem inclined to adopt the suggestion; and therefore, no cheering took place; at which I was very much pleased, despising the thing as I do from the bottom of my heart; detesting it as I always have, and particularly since the nine-times-nine cheers of the tax-hunting crew at Liverpool. Besides, upon the present occasion, there would have been that which might have been deemed *mean-ness*, on the part of this company, pecuniary situated as they were with regard to me. It consisted principally of men of whose conduct I had spoken for many years in terms of unqualified disapprobation. The business of the day was for them to *hear* me, and not to *cheer* me; which latter would have been, under the circumstances just stated, very unbecoming in them, and by no means pleasing to me. Upon viewing this company I felt satisfaction not easily expressed. I saw a company of farmers; equal even to that who honoured me with their attention at Chichester last year. They had been called together, not by any spirit of party; not because they were partisans of mine; not because they had any dislike to the Ministers or to any body else that I have opposed;



not because they had read the Register; but because they were of opinion, from what they had heard of me, that they should be likely to hear from me something that might assist their judgment in the present critical state of their affairs. Nothing could be more gratifying to me than this. I felt proud at being placed in such a situation; and I endeavoured, by my sincerity and openness of language, to show them that I was not unworthy of it.—A considerable part of the rustic harangue of which I am about to give a sketch, was, as the reader will see, pretty much of a repetition of what has been before put in print. But, those who have been regular readers will be pleased to recollect, that what is repetition to them was quite new to these farmers of Wiltshire; and that it will be expected, throughout that county, that what was delivered in the way of harangue shall be found in print. I profess, of course, to give merely the substance; or very little more; and that substance was what will be found described in the following words.

“GENTLEMEN,—The drinking of my health upon this occasion, presents to my mind every circumstance calculated to give me

satisfaction. I was born and bred in the cultivation of the land. Farmers have, throughout my life, been that portion of society most esteemed by me. When very young and in the army, in the king's provinces in the north of America, the friends and acquaintances that I sought (out of the service) were farmers. At a more advanced age, and in France, farmers were again my acquaintances and associates. Afterwards, during a long residence in the United States of America, though my pursuits caused my business to be in great cities, my intimate and personal friends were always farmers. And at this time, notwithstanding all those circumstances which so naturally connect me in one way or other with persons other than farmers, amongst men in that always heretofore happy state of life are those whom I most love and esteem. To have my health drunk by you, therefore, who are all complete strangers to me, and for the purpose for which it has been avowedly given, gives me, as it ought to give me, greater pleasure than it would to receive the applause of all the courtiers existing upon the face of the earth. And this I may say with the greater propriety, and without any danger of

meanness of motive imputed ; because, Gentlemen, it is pretty notorious that I never was amongst your flatterers in the days of your prosperity. On the contrary I was, perhaps, the very foremost amongst those to censure that conduct in you, which really has been one of the principal causes of those calamities which you have now to endure, and which it is my most sincere desire to help to alleviate. As to *reproach*, Gentlemen, reproach is due where the conduct of men tends to the injury of their country, as your conduct certainly did for a great number of years. However, as to the punishment due to misconduct, it is nonsense to talk of that ; for, were we to adopt a mode of thinking like this, we must think it just to cause the destruction of our country. You were acting under delusion ; and if you despised the voice of those who would have dissipated that delusion, it is for them, nevertheless, now to prevent your ruin if they can, or, they would be more selfish and blameworthy than you ever were. —Gentlemen, a great part of the hindrance to efficient measures for the relief of the country appear to me to arise from the farmers and others connected with the land being considered

merely as a class of the community. To hear some of the politicians of the present day ; and some of those who have, unfortunately, but too much influence and power ; to hear these persons, one would imagine that you formed only one class out of a great number of classes of which the community consist. They tell us that the classes must all be taken care of, and that all the other classes must not be sacrificed for one. According to their notion, there is the class of Shipowners ; the class of Merchants ; the East-India class, the West-India class ; the class of Fundholders, the Military class and the Naval class ; the class of Placemen, and Pensioners, the class of Sinecure-people, and, at last, the vulgar *Agricultural* class. Why, Gentlemen, this “ class,” as they call it, is the whole body of the people ; it is the whole nation ; for, what are the Tradesmen, the Journeymen ; what are even the Doctors and Lawyers of this city, but persons engaged in agriculture. Without the land, what are they ? They do not, indeed, plough and sow and reap and mow ; but, let those who live in the farm-houses be ruined, and they are all ruined, too. It is not, therefore, a class, to the root of



which the axe of ruin is now laid; but the whole nation, of which you, at this present moment, are only the first upon the list of the victims.—It is for me, now, Gentlemen, to endeavour to make you some compensation for the trouble you have taken in coming here; not by flattering you; not by imitating your deluders, but by frankly giving you my opinions as to the matters in which you are most deeply interested; which do not affect you distantly; which are not mere possibilities or probabilities; but which affect you immediately, and, that, too, in a manner the most vital. Every farmer knows, that, with present prices and present taxes, he cannot continue to pay rent, except out of his capital, and that great as that capital may be, it must finally come to an end. The main thing, therefore, is for him to make his mind up as to the question whether prices will rise. My opinion is that they will not; but on the contrary, that they will fall. I leave the effect of seasons out of the question; but ground my opinion upon that which I know must take place with regard to the currency. You all know that it is the diminution in the quantity of the currency that has caused the reduction of prices; and you

must therefore know that, if a further diminution of the currency take place, there must be a further reduction of prices. The operation of the thing is this. The law of legal tender wholly ceases on the first of May next. That will unquestionably cause an increased demand for gold in exchange for paper. That gold must come from abroad; and, in all probability, the far greater part of it immediately from France. That being the nearest, and beyond all comparison the most wealthy country upon the Continent. Bringing the gold from France will cause gold to rise in price in France; the gold here must be kept up to the same price as the gold of France will be at, or else the gold will leave this country again. You see, therefore, that not only must paper be drawn in here in quantity equal to the gold brought in; but in *greater quantity*; otherwise the gold here would continue at the same price that it is now, which would not be equal to that of the advanced price of gold in France.—Thus, then, Gentlemen, there will be before the first of May, or immediately afterwards, more pounds in paper drawn in, than there will be pounds in gold put out. Therefore there will be a

further diminution of the quantity of the currency, and a further diminution of the prices.—This, however, is not necessary in order to effect the ruin of the renting farmer. His ruin is complete, if he persevere in paying any rent at all with present prices and present taxes. A very large part of the farmers are placing their reliance on the vague and, in my opinion, groundless hope that the landlords themselves will interfere. Gentlemen, there are many reasons why they should not interfere; at least, while you have any capital remaining in your pockets. They see clearly enough, that there is no efficient relief to be given without a very large reduction of the interest of the National Debt. Out of sixty-four millions of taxes collected in the kingdom, and fifty-four of which are collected in England alone, the other being collected in Ireland and Scotland; out of these sixty-four millions, that which is called the National Debt actually causes the expenditure of forty millions or more; for it is the debt, you will observe, that demands almost the whole of the army, and a large part of all the other expenses. Now, to make an efficient reduction of this debt is hardly within the scope of possibility, without resorting to Acts of Parliament that shall touch deeply the property of the Church, and that shall affect the families, the relations, the kindred, of a considerable part of the most powerful landlords, in a manner extremely disadvantageous to them. If the debt cannot be reduced; if efficient relief cannot be given without producing this effect as to the families of these landlords, they will hesitate long before they will bestir themselves in a vigorous manner for the causing of such reduction. To take a simple case: If I have a son or two who are receiving more out of the taxes than I lose by the falling-off of my rents; if that son or two must lose what they receive by the measures that would give me my whole rent, I balance the loss against the gain, and finding that I gain by the present state of things, I am by no means in haste to change it, though my tenants, one after another, are dropping into the workhouse. At any rate, as long as they have *capital* left to pay me something, and as long as they have stock upon the farm of which I have the key, I shall certainly go on preferring a hope that things will come about, to the taking of steps which would strip my sons of their incomes. Hence,



Gentlemen, that torpidity in the landlords which appears so unaccountable to you. That they will bestir themselves *at last*, or endeavour to bestir themselves in defence of their estates is likely enough. I think they will bestir themselves too late for their own interest; but I am very sure they will bestir themselves too late for your interest; and, in short, that they will not bestir themselves at all, so long as you have capital wherewith to pay them rent, as long as you have stock upon which they can seize. In saying this, I do not impute knavish design or base motive of any sort to the gentlemen who are owners of the land. They act as other men would do under similar circumstances; they consult their own interests, which is the course of human nature; which always points out to man self-preservation. I do not say that if I were a landlord myself I should act very differently from them; but this I know that laws should be so contrived as to prevent one part of the community from profiting unjustly at the expense of another. We have heard some of the landlords speaking as if they meant to make a stand for their property. Mr. Bennet, for instance, one of the Members for

this county, did, during the last Session of Parliament, discover a disposition to make such a stand; but then the disposition was evinced in so feeble a manner, that it really amounted to nothing on which any rational man can place a reliance. On yourselves, Gentlemen, much more than on any body else, will your fate depend. The reliance which some men would bid you have upon the Government, and on the Parliament as now constituted, seems to me not a bit better founded than any reliance to be placed upon the landlords. Not that I question at all the sincere and most anxious desire of both Ministers and Parliament to relieve you and to save you; but I question very greatly the wisdom of the former as to this particular matter, and I question the practicability of efficient measures by the latter in its present state. As an instance of what the Ministers think about these matters, let me mention to you a pamphlet, which is ascribed to a *Mr. Courtenay*, who is in some office or other under the Government, and who appears to be a person much confided in by our new Minister, Mr. Canning. Just before the beginning of the last Session of Parliament, a pamphlet was put forth by this gentleman,

containing a sort of exposition of motives on the part of the Ministers. In this pamphlet it was broadly asserted, that the distress of agriculture could not continue long. The argument was this: "no business will be carried on unless it yield a *proper profit*;" "the business of farming is carried on, and will continue to be carried on; therefore the business of farming must yield a *proper profit*." Here, in syllogism as regular as ever logician laid down, it is proved that you are receiving a proper profit out of your business, and that you must continue to receive out of your business such proper profit. Your experience falsifies the argument; it gives the lie direct to the result. Along with this doctrine has been coupled the doctrine of expenses being all defrayed by the *consumer*. Generally speaking; and taking in a long series of years, this is the case; but it is not the case at this moment with the consumers of agricultural produce. To show that the doctrine does not apply to every case: suppose me to be a maker of candles, and suppose my shop to be full of them. Suppose all at once an additional tax of a shilling a pound to be laid upon my candles. I pay the tax.

My customers, in consequence of the high price, take to burning rushes; my candles remain long upon my hands; I finally sell them for less than they cost me, and do those who consume them then pay all the expenses. Certainly the eater of bread pays all the expenses of raising that bread; but this is only when the farmer can pay his rent and pay all his outgoings out of the *produce* of the farm. If he pay any part of the outgoings out of *capital already accumulated*; which is the case at present, then the consumer does not pay all the expenses of raising the bread. Yet, Gentlemen, this is one of the many errors that have come into common use for our benefit through the instrumentality of the deep and dark school of Scotch political economists.—Of the Parliament we must speak with reserve, if not with reverence. As far as it has gone in the reducing of taxes, its Acts merit our approbation, and this I give as little grudgingly as any man in the kingdom. But I must say, that in the general turn of its mind I can discover nothing to excite a very lively hope of efficient measures from that quarter. I was particularly struck, the other day, with the late Act with regard to the turnpike-roads. It



being a thing of considerable bulk, I looked with eagerness to see if I could discover some regulation that would *lessen the tolls* which a farmer has to pay. Nothing appeared to me so natural as that a bushel of wheat, worth four and sixpence (or less) should not pay so high a toll as a bushel of wheat worth fifteen shillings. In short, knowing that the late measures about cash-payments have made sixpence as valuable as eighteenpence was before, I anxiously looked for some clause reducing the present toll of eighteenpence to sixpence. I looked, however, in vain for any thing of this sort; and found a law, the effect of which, if the law be enforced, must be to add greatly to the tradesmens' bills of the already breaking farmers; because, the law will compel them to cast aside their present wheels, and to have new ones whether they want them or not. Not a word did I find about lessening the tolls which the farmer has to pay; but a great deal indeed, about the shape and size of his wheels. The circumference, the diameter, the construction of which I found described with all the minuteness belonging to an arithmetical or geometrical problem. The cy-

lindrical form, the width of the tire, and particularly the depth of the heads of the nails with which the tire is to be fastened to the wheel. Of the latitude and longitude of wheels I found much more than an abundance; but of the bringing of tolls down to the proportion of the price of the produce of the land, I found not a single word. The authors of this Bill would appear to have adopted a new mode of looking at a country. Their eyes would appear to be fixed upon the little narrow strips along which the coaches roll; and not upon the parts where the plough goes, where the cattle graze, and whence come all the food and all the raiment and all the riches of the nation. Those little strips, however, do at this moment present a spectacle most instructive to the statesman, though, at the same time, enough to chill the heart in the body of every man that remembers what England was. Here we behold men driven from the fields, by the penury of the farmer, cracking stones into very small pieces that there may not be too rude a jolting of the food in the stomachs of those who are crammed with the taxes. Talk, indeed, of the wild schemes of radical reformers! Come, then,

our adversaries, and tell us if the world ever before saw such a thing as a nation of farmers unable to pay labourers to till the land, and compelled to be able to pay them for sitting by the way-side, cracking big stones into the size of marbles! Gentlemen, I defy the world to produce us the equal of this; and yet it appears lucky that this stone-cracking was discovered. In default of such a scheme, we must actually have resorted to that of Lord Castlereagh, the digging of holes one day and filling them up the next, or, if that brilliant thought were unavailing, we must have realized the old exaggerated proverb of flinging stones against the wind. — Where, then, Gentlemen, are we to look for a remedy? Where are we to seek for the grounds of hope of seeing better days? In that very thing which has been so reprobated, so laughed at, so scoffed at by so many persons, and by very few more than by the greater part of you; I mean a real reform of the Commons' House of Parliament! If, Gentlemen, that petition, which we in Hampshire signed on Portsdown Hill, and which is now on the journals of the Parliament; if that petition had been graciously received, and had been

acted upon in 1817, how many farmers, already ruined; how many more upon the verge of ruin would at this day have been prosperous and happy men!— Without this reform, Gentlemen, be you assured, that no efficient reductions will take place; and be you also assured, that without those reductions you must either cease to be farmers or must be ruined men. And, when I say ruined, I mean reduced to absolute pauperism or beggary. I do not mean merely reduced to poverty in a limited sense of the word; for, recollect, that when a man has fallen, he is not the same man that he would have been if he had never been aloft. He does not fall to the bottom of the farmers and stand at the head of the labourers; but he falls to the bottom of the labourers; and bitter as the thought is, unpleasant as I know it is for you to hear, painful as it is for me to say, it is my duty to say it, and I give it you as my settled opinion, that if you do not quit your farms or bestir yourselves to obtain a reform of the Parliament, thousands upon thousands of you who are now farmers, will, along with your children, become the labourers of your present labourers or your present labourers' sons. I know,



Gentlemen, that this is not the way for me to acquire popularity amongst you ; but I know that to be honest and sincere in the declaring of my opinions is the way to acquire a fair claim to your respect ; and I know also that in the end it is the way to possess it. It does not become me, stranger in the county as I am, to dictate to men like you, nor even officiously to obtrude on you my advice ; but upon this occasion, I cannot refrain from mentioning, that I have seen, in the county newspapers, that a meeting of farmers took place at Winchester on Saturday last ; that they signed a requisition to the Sheriff to call a County Meeting to take into consideration the propriety of petitioning the Parliament on the subject of their unparalleled distress, and on that of a suitable, efficient and speedy remedy. This requisition they have resolved to send to the several market-towns to be signed by the yeomen ; and, Gentlemen, my opinion decidedly is, that if the yeomen in every county in England will act thus, and will, when they meet, pray, in the language of the intelligent and public-spirited yeomen of the county of Kent, for a Reform of the Parliament and reduction of the interest of the debt, the thing

will be done, you will be saved, and the country will be once more happy and free, and relieved for ever from that disgraceful sight, labourers cracking the stones into little bits ; labourers, reduced to half-skeletons, thus employed by the way-side, while, with full bellies and plump cheeks, they ought to be whistling to the jingle of the plough-traces on the other side of the hedge. This brings me, Gentlemen, to that conclusion to which I should long ago have come, had I not been enticed along by that singular patience and attention with which you have honoured me, and which I value so much more than bawling and clamour. Conclude, however, I cannot, without an observation or two with regard to the hardly pressed and unhappy labourers. Gentlemen, there seems to be a regular scheme on foot for getting something out of this body of persons, wherewith to satisfy the other demands upon the farmer. He cannot now pay all the demands that are made upon him. The *taxes* : “ oh ! he “ must pay them ; for they are for “ the support of the Government ! ” The *tithes* : “ not to pay them “ were to sin against God, as well “ as against man ! ” The *rent* : “ he must pay *that* ; for here is “ the lease ; here is the parch-

"ment; and what man will be worse than his contract?" Well then, what are the other outgoings? The *poor-rates*: "aye, reduce them!" The *labourers' wages*: "aye, pinch him! Get something out of him! Let him have less to eat and less to wear, and less to warm him!" Gentlemen, every such project will fail, in the end. Every such project is in defiance not only of the laws of God, but of nature herself. The landlord supplies the land; but what is his land without the hand of the labourer? I have no wish to depreciate the claim of the landlord; but is his claim better than that of the labourer? Is the dirt on which we tread more precious than the sweat of man? Is property in land to be set before labour, which, according to every principle of law as well as of justice and reason, is the very foundation of all property of every description. Laying aside, however, all principle connected with the subject; divesting ourselves if we can be so base as to wish it, of all those feelings which nature has placed in our breast, and looking at the matter with an eye of common *prudence* only, who can think of interest, of safety, of one moment's happiness or quiet, surrounded by a swarm of starving labourers? Gentlemen, look at unhappy Ireland: think of the occupier of a farm, compelled to pass the night with lights burning in his house, with arms ready loaded; with his friends and relations collected together as in a garrison; with the doors barricaded; with all the avenues rendered inaccessible; with a force distributed in preparation for attack; and think of the feelings

of the master of that house, while his stacks and his out-buildings are blazing, and he daring not to sally out to face the invaders of his own farm-yard! For myself, I can safely say, that I would not accept of the proprietorship of fifty estates upon the condition of leading such a life upon one of them for one winter; and I think I can safely say, that what I feel upon this subject is the feeling of you all. The description which I have just given is no description of mine. My genius has not the merit of inventing a thing so full of horrors. I merely repeat what we read in almost every newspaper that reaches us from Ireland. Do you, Gentlemen, wish to see England in such a state as that? Every Englishman's heart answers, "No!" No: God Almighty forbid that the once happy farm-houses of England should be converted into scenes like this! Well, then, Gentlemen: farmers of Wiltshire, do you see any other means of avoiding such a calamity than that of treating the labourers with gentleness and justice? Almost through the whole of my life, being an employer of labourers myself, I am aware that they are not without their faults any more than the rest of mankind. I am aware that their follies and vices stand in need of the correction of those whom they serve. I am aware of all this; but I cannot forget what is due to the toils that they perform; I cannot forget the endless repetition of the commands of God to render to labour its due reward; I cannot forget that it is owing to accident, perhaps more than any thing else, that I am not at this day



a labourer myself; and I cannot forget, though I cannot not about religion; though I make not a bawling about blasphemy, that it is the duty of us all to do by others as we under similar circumstances would have those others do unto us.—Gentlemen, for the great attention that you have paid to me, and particularly for the patience and the manifestly just and kind feeling with which you have heard what I have said with regard to the labourers, the only return I have to make you is that of most sincerely wishing you, what without your own exertions I am persuaded you will never again enjoy, prosperity.”

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#### DINNER AT NEWBURY.

*From the “STATESMAN” of  
Saturday.*

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THE day before yesterday (17th inst.) being a Fair-day and Market-day at the same time at this great mart for corn and cattle, Mr. COBBETT, agreeably to his previous notification, dined with the farmers at the Pelican. Comparatively few persons sat down to dinner; but after the cloth was removed, and the danger of expense along with it, the room, which was tolerably large, became perfectly full, while the passage leading to it (the door being kept open) was also crowded as much as possible. These circumstances are mentioned for the purpose of showing the interest excited by the subjects in agitation. People may, indeed, ascribe the state of these circumstances to just what

they please. But, here they are; Six-Acts do not provide banishment for us for stating such circumstances: we choose to state them and state them we will. The cloth being removed, the Chairman gave the KING's health, and, we believe, he gave the Church along with it. At any rate, the thing seemed to attract very little attention; and we wish, with all our hearts, for the credit of those who drink toasts, as well as out of respect to the King himself, that this sort of ceremony were for ever laid aside.—The Chairman having given Mr. COBBETT's health, he rose and spoke pretty nearly to the following effect according to the notes taken on the spot. We do not pretend to give word for word; we pretend to give the substance, and that we are sure we give correctly.

GENTLEMEN—It is very well understood, without any positive compact between us, that you are to drink my health and that I am to make you a speech. I will not, therefore, waste your time in vain apologies about troubling you, or with that species of mock-modesty which is so much in vogue, but which is very little short of hypocrisy, and therefore a thing which I scorn to employ.—At a late meeting at Liverpool, Mr. CANNING had his health drunk with *nine times nine* cheers. We have heard much reprobation of *mouth-honour*: but, I think, *mouth-honour* so perfectly liberal as this never was before heard of in the world. Only think, Gentlemen, of eighty-one bawls coming out of a couple of hundred mouths; conceive, if you can, any thing more disgusting, any thing more foul than these bawls,

than the fumes of these bawls, pumped up from stomachs gorged with turtle-soup and with wine, purchased, too, for the far greater part out of the taxes drained from you and from the rest of those who labour for their bread! This noisy crew were said to be *merchants*. Merchants, indeed! Traffickers, if you like, but in something of a nature very different, indeed from cottons and woollens, or any other species of tangible and visible goods. These people were, in short, a set of hungry seekers after a share in the taxes. They knew that Mr. CANNING was to be either Governor-General of India, or Secretary of State. In either capacity they knew that he would have something to bestow upon somebody. They knew, indeed, that he could not provide for *them all*; but each of them hoped that he would provide something for *him* or some of his relations.—When a pretty girl has half a dozen lovers, they know that only *one* can win her; but each of them hopes to be the fortunate one; and therefore the whole of them court her with equal ardour. Contemptible as scenes like this are; unworthy as they are of a man of real talent such as Mr. CANNING is; ashamed as he ought to have been of this *mouth-honour*, to transactions like that at Liverpool we are, perhaps, to ascribe no small part of those calamities which are now showing themselves in forms so hideous. This species of shouting and bawling was one of those means that were made use of during the late war to *keep up the spirits of the people*, as it was called; that is to say, to blind them, to deceive them, to

induce them to approve of the war and of all its expenses, the consequences of which we now see before us; but which consequences we only see, as yet, a very small part, comparatively speaking. [Mr. COBBETT here went into a statement of the grounds of his opinion as to a further fall of prices; but as this was little more than a repetition of that which will be found in our paper of Monday last, as delivered to the farmers at Andover, we shall omit it here.] There is a persuasion amongst the farmers, that the *landlords* will take care of the farmers; that they will never suffer these calamities to proceed until they themselves have lost their estates. Gentlemen, there is a great error in this way of thinking. I have said it, God knows, often enough before; but I cannot too often repeat that the landlords have an interest, quite other than that of the farmers, and, in some respects, directly opposed to it. There are certain great landlords, and perhaps, the far greater part of the landlords, who can never be expected to do that which can bring the only remedy for these calamities. The remedy in the opinion of every man who reflects upon the subject, is a change in the mode of electing those who impose the taxes, and who authorise the spending of the money. Now, if I were a great landlord; if I had a brother or other relation that was a Bishop, for instance; and if several persons belonging to my family, were enjoying immense incomes under the present mode of electing members of Parliament, should I not be very slow in doing any thing to cause a change in that mode?



Better for *me* and my family to lose a part of our *rents*; nay, perhaps to lose the whole of our rents, than to do that which would endanger the existence of these incomes out of the taxes. There is, for instance, a family not very distantly connected with this county—I mean the family of Lord RADNOR. And when I mention this family, I select one, perhaps as much respected as any in the kingdom. The Peer himself is universally regarded as an honest and independent man. His son Lord FOLKESTONE is honoured by every body that knows him; and has frequently acted, in the Parliament, a very spirited part in favour of the rights of the people. You are sensible that if this family were to put itself in motion; were really to better itself; the effect would be prodigious. There appears upon the face of things, every reason for their doing this. They must be losing a considerable part of their rents. They must see that they shall lose a great deal more of those rents; and yet the family of Radnor are, in this state of things as quiet as so many mice. The truth is, that one and the other belonging to this family; the relations by blood or the relations by marriage; family connexions distant or near; those that are clergy and those that are not, receive from sources other than that of rents, and principally out of the taxes, not less than twelve or fourteen thousand pounds a year.—Why, Gentlemen, this is quite enough. The Noble Lord and his son, neither of them touch any part of this money; but they, like the rest of mankind, have an eye to the whole of the

interest of the whole of their family. Then there are the landlords of the second class. Look at their connexion with the clergy, with the taxgatherer, with the army, with the navy; with, in short, those of every description who live upon the taxes. These landlords see their rents going; but if you point out a remedy that will endanger those who live upon tithes and taxes, they turn from the remedy as something too frightful to look at. The Church in particular, must look at such remedy with affright; for it must be evident to every man that the Parliament never can settle the affairs of the nation without doing something that shall materially affect the Church property. My opinion is that a reformed Parliament would not sit a week before some one would propose some measure materially to affect this property; and, for my part, I frankly declare that I would, without doing this, not sit in Parliament one single day. This is very well known to all the parties interested; and, therefore, we may cease to wonder why landlords are so backward in endeavours to obtain that Reform out of which, only, a remedy can spring. Besides these considerations, there is this further circumstance, that, up to *this time*, the landlords in general have been gainers instead of being losers by the fall of prices. They alledge, and very truly, that the fundholder is receiving three or four times as much as he ought to receive; but they seem to forget that in the same proportion, they are receiving from the farmer. In time, it is true, they must cease to receive this; but hitherto they

have received it ; and, receive it they will, as long as the capital of the farmer shall last. To expect any relief from measures to be adopted by the Government itself without any exertions of your own, would be strange indeed, after what you have beheld. Nothing can be more common than the belief among the farmers that the Government knows best what ought to be done for them. If it do know best, it is strange that its measures should have brought the farmers to ruin. Nevertheless, this opinion is very natural, and unhappy, indeed, is the country where the very existence of the farmer and his family must depend upon his understanding matters so intricate as these. To be skilful in his own business is enough for him ; and therefore it is by no means unreasonable that he should rely upon those whom he helps so amply to pay for adopting wise measures with regard to the nation's affairs.—But, in spite of all this, we are fallen into times and circumstances, which renders it necessary for the most humble of us to endeavour to understand such matters, and even when experience tells us that we ought to trust to our own judgment, and not too confidently rely on the opinions of those who ought to be our guides to happiness and safety. As an instance of the fallibility of persons on whom we have been taught to rely, let me beg leave to call your attention to the opinions expressed at different times by Mr. *Huskisson*. This gentleman enjoys great emolument from the public treasure ; he has been elevated to the rank of a privy-counsellor of the King.—That rank places him at the same board

with His Majesty himself. He is a person who has been thirty years engaged in public affairs ; and to all this I add my opinion, that he is the cleverest man of all those who have any thing at this time to do with the devising of measures to be adopted by the Parliament ; and I believe, further, that his opinions have more weight with the King's ministers than those of any other man. Here, then, if any where, we might reasonably look for something on which to rely ; but what have we here ? In the year 1815, Mr. *Huskisson* was an advocate of the Corn Bill, for which the people of Havant were stupid enough to burn him in effigy. His doctrine at that time was this ;—that the prices of produce must be at least *double* the amount of what they were before the war ; or that, it would be impossible to collect between fifty and sixty millions a-year in taxes, without the ruin of all those connected with the land. This was his doctrine in 1815. During the last Session of Parliament, he held the doctrine, that between fifty and sixty millions of taxes a-year could still be collected, though the prices were then come down to what they were before the war, without the ruin of any body connected with the land. Well, then, Gentlemen, where are we to look for opinions on which to place our reliance ? The true way is, to judge for ourselves, taking experience for our guide ; and if we do this, we shall find that there is no remedy but in a very large reduction of the taxes and tithes ; that these reductions cannot be effected without a Reform in the Parliament ; and that, for the reasons before



stated, and to which many other reasons might be added, to obtain that Reform the yeomanry themselves must step forward with just as much zeal as they were induced to step forward to cause to be incurred those enormous debts, to pay the interest of which they are now giving the very beds from under them. If two or three hundred of the yeomanry of this county were to sign a requisition to the Sheriff, requesting him to call a Meeting of the County, to take into consideration the propriety of presenting a petition to the Parliament on the subject of their distresses and on that of a remedy for them; I am not to be made to believe, that the Sheriff would refuse to call such meeting; if he were, I am not to be made to believe that the yeomen themselves could not sign a petition stating that refusal at the same time; and if all the counties in England were thus to petition, including a prayer for Reform of Parliament in every one of their petitions, I am not to be made to believe that those petitions would be rejected by the Parliament. Far be it from me to endeavour to encourage in you, Gentlemen of Berkshire, the hope that your efforts would be seconded by those who are called your members; for, during the whole of the last Session of Parliament, by far the most important Session that I have ever known; and during which there was no other county whose members did not say something or other, at any rate, not one single sentiment, as far as I could observe, escaped the lips of either of the members for Berkshire. Yet, this has been called a public-spirited county; and the free-

holders really seemed to think that they were doing great things for themselves when they elected these two members; members may be inefficient, to be sure, and yet be honest. They may be virtuous, though incapable; but to an assembly, where to talk is the business, who but the freeholders of Berkshire ever sent men that were dumb? One of these members, however, though silent in the House, has not always been silent out of it. On the hustings at the last election, he was, if I have been rightly informed, more talkative than just or prudent. I think I am correct in saying that he imputed to me (a man in no wise interfering with him or his affairs) a connexion and anticipation with Mr. THISTLEWOOD and his associates, who were at that time in irons, waiting to be tried for their lives. (A gentleman here said that he heard it himself.) This was a *falsehood*, and a *malignant falsehood* too; for I never even saw Mr. THISTLEWOOD, in all my life.—Gentlemen, there is no accounting for tastes; but, this I will say, that if a faithful historian shall put upon record fairly and truly, the whole history and character of the parties, I would choose to be put upon record under the name of THISTLEWOOD, rather than under that of DUNDAS! —(Loud cheering.)—The moral to be drawn from this, however, is of much more importance than the personal interest of the matter. It has always been thus, Gentlemen! The cry of *sedition*; the cry of *blasphemy*; some calumny or other; some horrible out-cry, to drown the voice of truth. Mr. DUNDAS had at the time alluded to, just come piping

hot down into the county, after having voted for those Six-Acts, the far greater part of which were levelled at me. During the discussions on those acts, numerous were the insinuations from various of the persons concerned; and Mr. CANNING almost more violent, but I may say more honest than the rest, pretty nearly openly avowed the intention when he called upon the House to extinguish for ever that accursed "torch of discord;" aye, Gentlemen, that very torch which has since saved so many families from ruin, and which had it not been for efforts like those of Mr. Dundas, would, perhaps, have prevented all the ruin that we now behold. It is long, of course, since I first heard of these attacks upon the hustings in Berkshire. I did not deem the party from whom they came of sufficient importance to make them a subject of commentary in my writings, but being now in Berkshire, and in a company where, in all probability, the accuser has some friends, I now make my remarks upon his conduct; and if he will meet me at Reading on the 9th of November, I will there do the same to his face. Gentlemen, I scorn to disguise from you my opinions with regard to the conduct of the freeholders of this county at the late election. Hard it would indeed have been if they could not have found amongst themselves, a person whom I should have thought more fit than Mr. DUNDAS; but they had another gentleman offered to them of known soundness of principles, of as sound an understanding and excellent talents as any to be found in the kingdom.

If, therefore, they now suffer, let them have the justice to recollect, that in rejecting Mr. HALLETT, they neglected the best means that they then had of preventing their sufferings. — When I have asked (for great has been my astonishment on the subject) how it could happen that such a person as Mr. DUNDAS should be preferred to such a person as Mr. HALLETT, the answer has been that the former was such a *gentlemanly* sort of a man! This might be a very good reason for selecting a man to be master of ceremonies or to be a Court-sycophant; but in a gentleman, in a person to take care of the interests of plain and honest men, what do you want but civility; but an absence of rudeness, but plain dealing and integrity; and, I must say, that to entitle a freeholder to my most hearty contempt, nothing more can be wanted than proof of the fact that he is capable of giving his vote as the price of a compliment in a soft voice, accompanied with a supple Scotchman-like bow! — (Cheers.) — [Here he turned to the subject of the currency, and stated the reasons which were stated to the farmers at Andover, for believing that the Ministers would persevere in their present course, and not repeal the Bill of Mr. PEEL. After urging the farmers either to quit their farms as quickly as possible, or to bestir themselves in order to effect a large reduction of the taxes, he reminded them of his opinion so long ago published relative to this subject.] Gentlemen, let me, for your sakes and not for my own, take credit for what is due to me as to an understanding of this



important subject. It is within your recollection that the Parliament passed the Bill of Mr. PEEL with the full persuasion that it would produce comparatively very little inconvenience to any one.— Nevertheless you know that it was really a Bill of Confiscation; that it was a measure, which, if it had been intended to produce ruin, such as the world never saw before, could not have been more complete. Far be it from me to accuse the Ministers of the intention of doing this evil, they certainly intended no such thing; but having done it, does it become us to say that they were wise! Indeed, they never could intend, from the very beginning of the war to do that which they have finally done; to break up a whole race of farmers; to make those happy and tranquil abodes, the farm-houses, scenes of anxiety and of anguish such as no tongue can describe, and such as to conceive we must feel. They never could have intended to transfer the patrimony of the little land-holders especially to those who live upon the interest of money. They never could have intended to ruin the borrower; to ruin the industrious, to fatten the idle, to nullify the will of the dying, to set brothers and sisters together by the ears in the division of property, to break all contracts for time, and, in short, to tear up society by the roots. They never could have intended to do all or any of these things.— These things, however, they have done; and yet, the Bishop of Winchester applauds them for their wisdom! I am not disposed upon any occasion to interfere with persons in this station of life; but, when a Bishop chooses to put

forth a pamphlet, though he call that pamphlet a charge to his clergy, he becomes an author, and challenges our commentary and criticism. This Reverend person says, in the pamphlet to which I allude, that our government, *by its wisdom*, prevented this country from being ruined *like France*: and that is very true: ruined like France, indeed, because the French farmer has changed his coarse rags for a good fine coat; because the farmers in France now prosper beyond all example; and because the farmers of England present a contrast, when compared with those of France, which it is truly lamentable to behold. It is very true that the *tithes* have been preserved by the war against France; and if that be a proof of the wisdom of the government, we must agree with the Bishop that the government has been wise.— Again, I say, however, that I impute not the evils that we endure to the intention of the government. In the Report upon which they founded Mr. PEEL's Bill, we have a clear proof that they did not intend to do what they have done. Instructed by Mr. BARING and Mr. RICARDO, they thought that the prices of agricultural produce would fall only about four and a half per cent. so that, upon every hundred pounds worth of corn or of sheep, there would be a fall of only four pounds ten shillings; and, consequently, that a South-Down ewe, which then sold for forty shillings, would in future, sell for thirty-six. How mistaken they were, Gentlemen, you know but too well. How much better they ought to have been informed upon such matters, you also well know; how unfit they were to

manage the affairs of the nation when they could fall into such gross errors, and take them as the basis of measures affecting the happiness of a whole people; and finally, perhaps, the safety of their sovereign's throne, this also you must well know; but still, something infinitely worse than this remains to be told; for, while none of them could see the errors upon which they were proceeding, and the terrible mischiefs with which those errors were fraught, there was one man who did see them all. He was indeed, in exile; he had crossed the seas to avoid the consequence of their terrible hostility; but, foreseeing that some such measure would be proposed, he had, the year before, pointed out all the consequences, and had caused his observations to be printed and to be read by them if they chose. The moment the Bill of Mr. Peel reached him, he lost not a moment in addressing to His Majesty himself, a paper, in which the consequences were all portrayed with lines as exact and colours as strong as they could be portrayed at this very moment; and, that nothing might be wanting to complete this strange event, in less than two months after this paper was published in London, the Parliament met and passed Acts, the principal object of which was, to put a stop, for ever, to the writings and publications of that very man! In conclusion, Gentlemen, let me trouble you with a few words with regard to the labourers. There seems to be on foot a grand scheme for making the farmer a machine wherewith to squeeze something out of the labourer to be given to the landlord and the tithe-owner. I know

that nature, as well as reason and justice say, that this shall not be done. The Bible, from one end to the other inculcates the maxim that *those who will not work shall not eat*.—So says Moses, and so says St. Paul. There are some among us who would reverse the maxim and say, *those who will not work shall eat and those who will shall not!* Profoundly ignorant must those be, who think that such a maxim can be enforced. Our new minister, Mr. CANNING, has appeared, upon many occasions, to pride himself upon the want of knowledge as to those that he would call *low matters*. But, it is time for him now to inform himself with regard to them; for, if it do not require a greater mind, it is of far greater importance to a people, to trace out the path by which the labourer's dinner finds its way to the table of the sinecure lord, than it is to unravel the intrigues of courts and to fix boundaries to the extent of dominion. To the crop which the land produces the labourer has the first claim, for it is he that makes the crop. It is well known to you all, Gentlemen, that you cannot *live*, much less carry on your affairs amidst a race of starving labourers. You know well that you can trust nothing in the hands of a starving man; you know well that crime does not apply itself to acts necessary to the preservation of life. God, nature, and the laws have said, that man shall not die of want in the midst of plenty of food. Look at the state of the labourers in Ireland; presented to us, perhaps, with some colourings of exaggeration; but look at their state; and then let me put it to you; let



me put it home to the hearts of English farmers, whether they would, if they could, live in comfort themselves, while all around them were reduced to that state of misery? Were I a farmer; were I pushed even to the very verge of ruin, my labourers should share with me to the last, I would pay my tradesmen in full; and as to the landlord and tithe-owner, they must, if they have the heart to do it, take the rest. Gentlemen, great numbers of persons have thanked me personally for having been the cause of preserving them from ruin: if to-day I should have added only one to the number, the having occupied your time so long would require no apology.

## MARKETS.

Average Price of CORN for the week ending October 19.

Per Quarter.		s.	d.
Wheat.....	39	5	
Rye.....	20	4	
Barley.....	26	1	
Oats.....	18	17	
Beans.....	25	0	
Pease.....	28	1	

At MARK LANE (same week.)

Per Quarter.		s.	d.
Wheat.....	41	3	
Rye.....	—	—	
Barley.....	27	6	
Oats.....	20	3	
Pease.....	31	4	
Beans.....	27	3	

SMITHFIELD, Monday, Oct. 21.

Per Stone of 8 pounds (alive).

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef.....	2	8	to	3 8
Mutton.....	2	8	—	3 0
Veal.....	3	8	—	4 8
Pork.....	2	8	—	4 0
Lamb.....	3	0	—	3 8

NEWGATE (same day).

Per Stone of 8 pounds (dead).

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Beef.....	1	8	to	2 6
Mutton.....	1	8	—	2 4
Veal.....	2	4	—	4 4
Pork.....	2	0	—	3 8
Lamb.....			—	

City, 23 Oct. 1822.

## BACON

The trade in this article seems to be at an end for the present. No new yet, and the old so much out of condition, that what is now on hand must be held for next spring; when low price and plenty of vegetables may cause it to be consumed. Notwithstanding the bad condition of the old now on hand, there is no disposition to buy new, to be shipped, except in very small quantities; although the manufacturers are pressing to sell at 30s. per cwt. on board in Ireland.—Best sizeable, 26s. to 28s.—Middling and heavy, 22s. to 24s.

## BUTTER.

The great quantity which is now accumulating in this market; and the unusually abundant supplies in all the markets of Ireland (in that of Dublin especially) have cast a damp upon the spirits of the speculators. And, as the whole body of the Cheesemongers are opposed to the speculation, it will, if the weather continue mild up to Christmas, and the supplies from

Holland and elsewhere continue pretty abundant, prove one of the most disastrous that have been known for some time. During the war it was not the practice to bring Irish Butter for *Summer and Autumn use*; but now it is brought here during the *hot weather*, and kept until it has deteriorated 10s. or 15s. per cwt. in quality. This circumstance, more than any other, is against speculation in Butter at this season of the year. The Market is very heavy, and many anticipate a decline.—Carlow, 83s. to 85s.—Belfast, 81s. to 82s.—Dublin, 80s. to 82s.—Waterford, 77s. to 78s.—Limerick, 76s. to 78s.—Cork, 76s.—Dutch, 98s.

### CHEESE

Still continues dull. The *best* of every kind will sell pretty freely; but every thing middling is unsaleable, except at *low* prices. It is altogether a bad trade just now.—Old Cheshire, 60s. to 74s.; New, 48s. to 54s.—Coloured Derby, 46s. to 50s.; Pale, 45s. to 46s.—Double Gloucester, 46s. to 50s.; Single, 42s. to 46s.; Middling, 36s. to 40s.

### Price of HOPS, per Cwt. in the BOROUGH.

#### Pockets.

	s.	s.	s.
Kent . . . . .	50	to 65	to 94
Sussex . . . . .	40	— 50	— 58
Essex . . . . .	45	— 60	— 72

#### Bags.

	s.	s.	s.
Kent . . . . .	45	to 84	to —
Sussex . . . . .	40	— 50	— —
Essex . . . . .	42	— 60	— —

Old Duty laid at £ 205,000.

Maidstone Fair on Thursday the 17th was numerously attended both with buyers and seller, but we are sorry to say that the Hop Trade was generally very heavy, and net near the business transacted that was expected. The Weald of Kent growth are very dull, but the Sussex Hops in particular meet with few buyers, although offered at a low figure, and the demand appears wholly confined to the Middle Kent bags, well packed and in good bagging, but few Kent pockets were offered. The general prices were for Pockets from 48s. to 60s. to 70s.; very fine and curious to 84s. Bags from 40s. to 60s.; fine to 75s. per cwt.

Worcester, Oct. 12.—At our Market this day, 1224 pockets of New Hops and five of Old were weighed; prices from 40s. to 58s.; those of fine quality from 60s. to 65s.; and a few very prime at 67s.

Stourport, Oct. 9.—At our market this day were weighed 748 pockets of Hops. Prices the same as last week.